1:Debrinheffer M-8 (ca. 1766) 1822
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night-fall an Abiponian boy brought an iron bridle, an axe, and some other trifles, the treasures of his family, to be guarded in my house. On being asked the reason of his doing so, he replied that the enemies would arrive in the night; for so it had been predicted by his mother, a famous juggler, who declared that whenever the enemy was approaching, she felt a pricking sensation in her left arm. "Oh!" replied I, "you may attribute that to the fleas, my good lad. I can tell you this on my own experience. Day and night I feel my left and my right arm too, as well as other parts of my body, insolently pricked and stung by fleas. If that were an indication of the enemy, we should never be free from their attacks night or day." But my words were vain; for the report of the old woman's presage got abroad, and disturbed the whole town all night. Yet, as often happened, no sign or vestige of the enemy appeared.

The Abipones, whom the desire of booty or glory induces to be constantly scheming war against others, are, in consequence, never free from suspicions of machinations against themselves. The more ardently they desire to take measures for their safety, the more readily do they believe themselves in danger from others, and generally for some foolish reason.

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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one daring to accuse them of cowardice, though no one could be ignorant that fear prompted their departure, security their return.

Whenever a cacique determines upon undertaking an excursion, a public drinking-party is appointed. Heated with that luscious beverage, prepared from honey or the algaroba, they zealously offer their services to the cacique, who invites them to war, sing triumph before the victory with festive vociferations, and, (who would believe it?) diligently execute when sober, what they promised in a state of intoxication. That love is kindled by love, as fire by fire, and that friends are gained by liberality, are trite proverbs in Europe, and have been experienced by us in our long commerce with the Abipones. A cacique who seldom gives a repulse will have numerous, obedient, and affectionate bordesmen. Kind words or looks, the marks of good-will, avail but little amongst the savages, unless accompanied with beneficence. They require at the cacique's hands whatever they take it into their heads to wish for, believing that his office obliges him to satisfy the petitions of all. If he denies them any thing, they say he is not a captain, or noble, and insolently bestow upon him the disgraceful appellation of wood-Indian—*Acumi Lanaŕaik*. The cacique has nothing, either in his arms or his

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721
648 I do not deny that the Abipones have been savage, inhuman, and ferocious, but only against those whom they believed to be their enemies. Before peace was established, they afflicted all Paraguay, for many years, with fire, slaughter, and rapine; but this they looked upon as the privilege of war, and indeed a thing to be gloried in, because they always found or suspected the Spaniards their enemies. They thought they were only repelling force by force, and returning injuries for injuries, slaughters for slaughters; which they deny to be wrong or dishonourable; seeing the same so frequently done, in time of war, by the Spaniards to the Portugueze, and by the Portugueze to the Spaniards. Led by their example, they insisted upon it that they should not be called assassins, and thieves, but soldiers, whose duty it is to offend their adversaries, and defend themselves and their possessions to the utmost of their power. [727] The heads of the Spaniards severed from their shoulders, they called their trophies, and preserved as testimonials of their valour. The innumerable herds of cattle, the thousands of horses, in short whatever they took from the Spaniards, they called booty justly obtained in war. They always disown the name of robbers, in the plea that all the cattle of the Spaniards, by right, belongs to them; because, born on lands which

1:Dobrizhoffer M-6 (ca. 1760) 1822
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the Spaniards forcibly wrested from their ancestors, and which, in their opinion, they at this day unjustly usurp. To eradicate these errors, we all ardently strove to instil into their ferocious minds an affection and friendship for the Spaniards; but our efforts were not crowned with success. Although they burnt with hereditary hatred to the Spaniards, yet, in their very manner of killing them, they displayed a sort of humanity. They inflicted death, but thought it unworthy of them, after the mortal blow, to torture, excruciate, tear, and mangle them, like other savages; though they were wonderfully solicitous about cutting off their heads, by displaying which they thought to testify their valour to their countrymen at home. They generally spared the unwarlike, and carried away innocent boys and girls unhurt. They used to feed infants, torn from their mothers' breasts, with the juice of fruits and herbs, during a long journey, and carried them home uninjured. If ever mothers, or their children, were slain, it was done by youths thirsting for the blood of the Spaniards, or by grown men enraged at the deaths of their countrymen whom the Spaniards had slain.

The Spaniards, Indians, Negroes, or Mulattoes, taken by them in war, they do not ill-use like captives, but treat with kindness, and in-

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1750) 1822
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701 could belong to, clearly discovered that a short
727 time previous, four Spaniards had been slain in that place, and that the perpetrator of the murder was a Spaniard, a captive, and leader of the Abipones, and more formidable to the Spanish nation than any Abipon. Many things
701 worthy of relation will occur respecting this
721 base crew, respecting Almaràz, Casco, Juanico, a Negro of Corrientes, Juan Joseph, an Ytatingua Indian, and above all, respecting Juan Diaz Caëperlahachin. This last, an Abipon by origin, had been taken in war by the Spaniards, when a boy, and afterwards converted to their religion. During twenty years which he spent in the town of St. Iago, in the service of the Spaniard Juan Diaz Caëperlahachin, he evinced much probity, and even piety. Every year, in the last week of Lent, did he publicly mangle his back with a bloody scourge; but after having effected his escape, and got back to his countrymen, he became the scourge of the Spaniards, and shedding torrents of their blood, obtained a high renown amongst his own people, to whom his knowledge of roads and places rendered him eminently useful; for, in expeditions having the slaughter of the Spaniards for their object, no man discharged the
648 offices of scout and leader more gloriously or more willingly than he. Peace being subse-

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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the memory of their ancestors are religiously celebrated with the same rites and ceremonies. Should the memory of her dead mother enter a woman's mind, she immediately loosens her hair, seizes a gourd, paces up and down the street with some women whom she calls to partake in her mourning, and fills the air with lamentation. Few nights pass that you do not hear women mourning. This they do upon their feet, with their bodies turned towards the spot where the deceased is buried, always accompanying their lamentations with the sound of gourds. Women find weeping easier than silence, and this is the reason why the nights are so seldom passed in quietness. The vociferation, however, always grows more violent as the day approaches; for when one begins to lament another follows her example, then a third comes, and then a fourth, till, by daybreak, the number of mourners seems greater than that of sleepers. The men meantime are by no means idle. The grief which the women express with tears and shrieks, they testify by shedding the blood of enemies or their own. The nearest of kin to the deceased immediately assembles all the fellow-soldiers he can raise, and leads them against the foreign foes by whose hands his relation perished. It is

1:Dobritzhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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his business to make the first attack against the author of the death, and not to return home till he has fully revenged it; though these savage heroes sometimes make an inglorious retreat, without obtaining vengeance on their enemies.

1;Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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sailors and ships. They look upon their wounds without a groan, and with as much indifference as they would upon those of another person. They are acquainted with all those arts which every European soldier admires, but which so very few practise. This alone is unknown to the Abipones, to despise death, and gain glory by encountering danger. They boast of martial souls, but are too unwilling to resign their lives. They are active, but can by no means be called brave, for a brave man would remain unterrified were the globe itself to fall in ruins, and would choose either to conquer or die. The Abipones always desire to conquer, but are never willing to die. They will curse a victory obtained at the expense of one of their countrymen's lives. They abhor triumphal hymns if mingled with funeral lamentations, and would reject a victory accompanied by the sighs of one mourning widow or orphan.

Certainly no one can accuse the Abipones of rashness in venturing their lives. Their chief adorations are paid to the goddess Security, the arbitress of their battles, without whose approving sanction they will never risk an engagement. They carefully avoid a contest of uncertain issue. They always threaten others, always fear for themselves, and trust nothing to chance. Before they undertake a warlike

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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expedition, they carefully consider the nature of the place, the numbers of their enemies, and the opportunity of the time. Any danger, or the least suspicion of it, will strike the spear from their hands, and extinguish all their ardour. Agis, King of Sparta, boasted that his soldiers, in the heat of war, did not enquire the number and strength of their antagonists, but where they were, that they might attack and put them to flight. The Abipones are never hurried into a combat with such blind impetuosity as this. They proceed cautiously, nor do the trumpets sound till all things have been diligently examined. When assured of their safety, they rush on like thunder, imitating now the cunning of Hannibal, now the delays of Fabius. They know that the daring are favoured by fortune, but not unless they exercise a sagacious foresight with regard to dangers. As persons about to cross a threatening river, try the ford that they may not be carried away by the current; so they never approach their enemies till after mature deliberation, that they may secure an unimperilled victory. The timidity of the Americans gives the name of rashness to what Europeans call courage. They think long and often upon what is to be done once. They never strike a blow which they have not previously contem-

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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181 plated, and then it is with a hand trembling
● 721 at every noise. They seldom attack openly,
[726] but do it in general unawares. They dare little against the bold who front assailants, and are accustomed to keep strict watch. They never fear less than when they perceive themselves the objects of fear. Craft,
181 and the swiftness of their horses, more than
726 strength, were what gave them the power to commit so many slaughters. Though you
[727] may object to their cowardice, yet that method of warfare is surely admirable, and agreeable to military tactics, which enabled them, with no loss, or a very trifling one of their own soldiers, to return home victorious, laden with the heads of the Spaniards, and triumphantly displaying crowds of captives, cattle, and other spoils taken from the enemy. *Hæc ars*, says Vegetius, *dimicaturis est necessaria, per quam vitam retineant, et victoriam consequantur.* For this purpose, heroes themselves have used a sword, and a shield, with the one to offend the enemy, with the other to defend themselves. Cunning, agility, and the swiftness of their horses, were a shield, nay, better than any shield, to the Abipones. If they see one or two of their fellow-soldiers fall, they immediately fly. When straitened, and deprived of all means of escape, fear is converted into rage,

1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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CHAPTER XXXV.

OF THE SCOUTS, AND WAR COUNCILS OF THE ABIPONES.

THEIR method of warfare varies according to 726
the adversaries they have to deal with. They adopt one mode of fighting against the Spaniards, another against savages like themselves. This, [721]
however, may be observed in general, that they are never precipitate in taking up arms against any one, nor ever hazard an attack unless confident of victory; though, like European generals, they are often deceived. Where they had looked for laurels, they reap deadly cypresses—they go out to seek wool, and return home shorn themselves. The fortune of war is always uncertain. After having determined upon a hostile expedition, they usually send out scouts to discover which way they are to go, and at what place begin the attack; to learn every particular respecting the number of their neighbours who might send supplies to their adversaries, and concerning the access to houses; carefully to examine the situation most convenient for an ambuscade, the places by which they might approach undiscovered, and whither, if need required, they might betake themselves

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
814 Abipcn 814

727 628 721 Whenever an Abipon dies by the hand of an enemy, the nearest relation of the deceased takes upon him to avenge his death. It is his business to invite his countrymen and hordesmen, or even the inhabitants of another horde, to join their arms with his, to lead them against the enemy, and, when the attack is made, to go first into battle. As they lend assistance to friendly nations, they seek it in turn from them, either when they are preparing for war, or when they apprehend it from others whom they deem themselves unequal to contend with alone. But, as Europe so often experiences, little confidence is to be placed in auxiliary forces. The friendship of the Indians is notoriously fickle and unsteady; for, as they enter into alliance merely with a view to their own advantage, they will suddenly turn their backs on their greatest friends, should the hope of the smallest emolument preponderate.

648 [572] [181]

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726 of darkness, and incur less risk of detection: on their return, if they are obliged to make it in haste, they wish that luminary to be on the increase. They generally begin a journey about mid-day, and in different companies, meeting together in the evening at some appointed place.

721 A European prince, when about to engage in a war, wants more than lead and iron: he stands in need of gold and silver wherewith to procure provisions, and pay his troops. The chieftain of the Abipones has no care of this kind: every one of his soldiers is furnished with plenty of horses, a formidable spear, a bow, and a bundle of arrows. These are their only instruments of war. The severed heads of the Spaniards, thousands of horses and mules taken from their estates, children torn from their mothers' bosoms, and the glory derived from these, serve both for the rewards and trophies of the fighting Abipones. Though the colony which they purpose 726 to attack be more than two hundred leagues 484 distant, they each drive but two horses before them, and ride upon a third. They do not judge it expedient to begin a journey laden with provisions. They carry nothing either for meat or drink. Formerly they are said to have had roasted rabbits for provisions, but that was when they were less exercised in hunting, being unprovided with horses. Now the Abipones

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
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I have known Abipones
273 who abstained from fermented liquors alto-
[626] gether; but these persons were contemned by the rest as cowardly, degenerate, and stupid; and indeed, I observed that they who excelled the rest in birth, military glory, and authority,
[622] were generally the most given to drinking. You can scarce see a circle of drinkers, at which the chiefs of the Abipones do not attend and preside.

[415] For cups they use either the skulls of their
[727] slain enemies, or gourds, or horns. They are
[576] unacquainted with the European fashion of
[721] drinking healths. When any one suggests the idea of a warlike expedition, they cry *Ld*, now; and snatching up their cups, express that they have ratified his proposal by a hearty draught.
[262] It is also remarkable, that, though extremely voracious at other times, they take scarce any food when they pass the day and night in drinking; from which it is evident that honey and the alfaroba possess great nutritive qualities. For my part, I never could prevail upon myself to taste that nectar of the Abipones, having often observed them chew the alfaroba, or honeycomb with their teeth, put it out of their mouths, and keep it to mix with the future beverage; for they think that, being mixed with saliva, it will serve for a ferment, to make the rest of the mass obtain a grateful